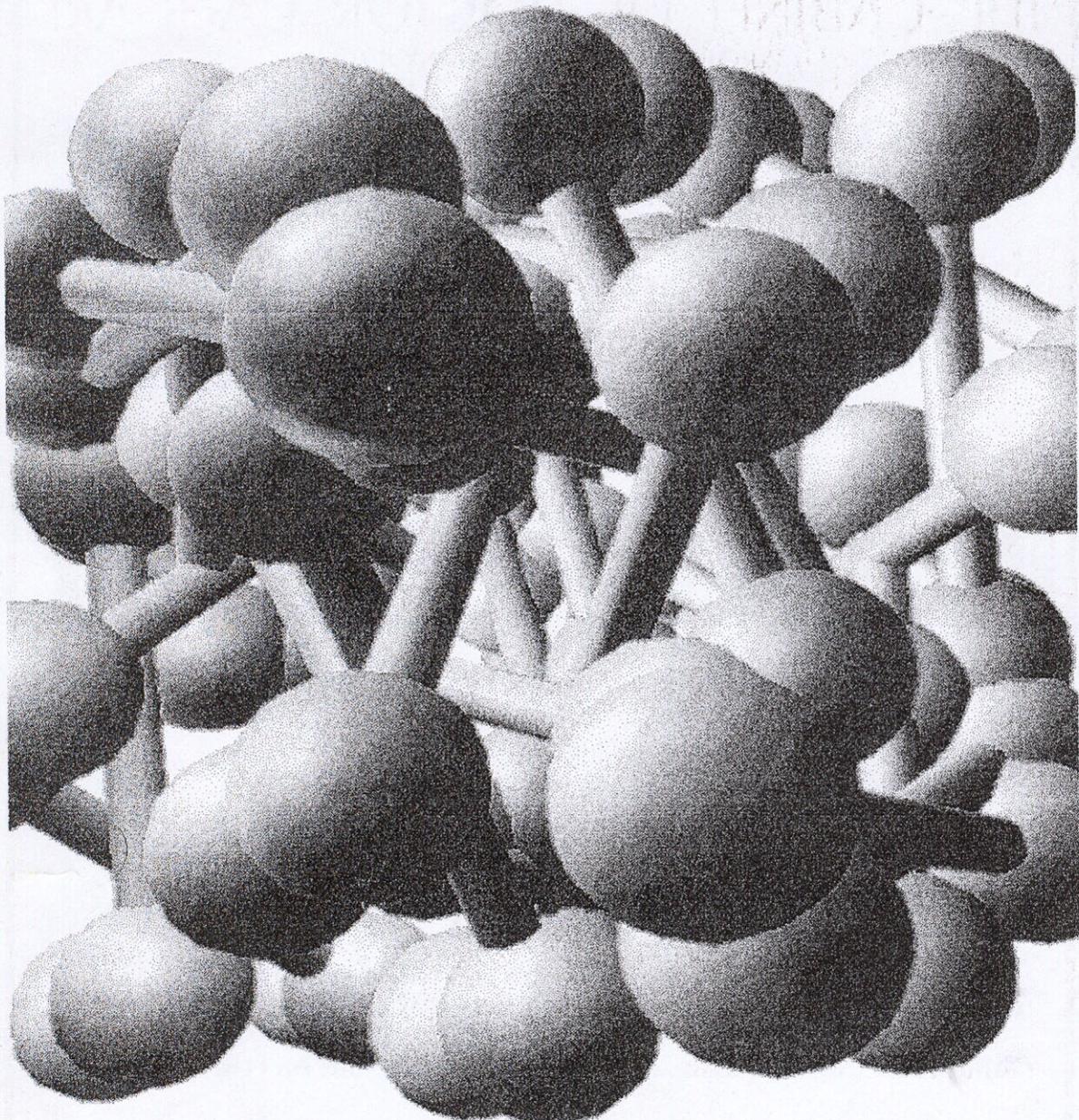


mécano

Volume 1 Number 2 - February/March 1997 - £1



kapotte muziek
aphasia

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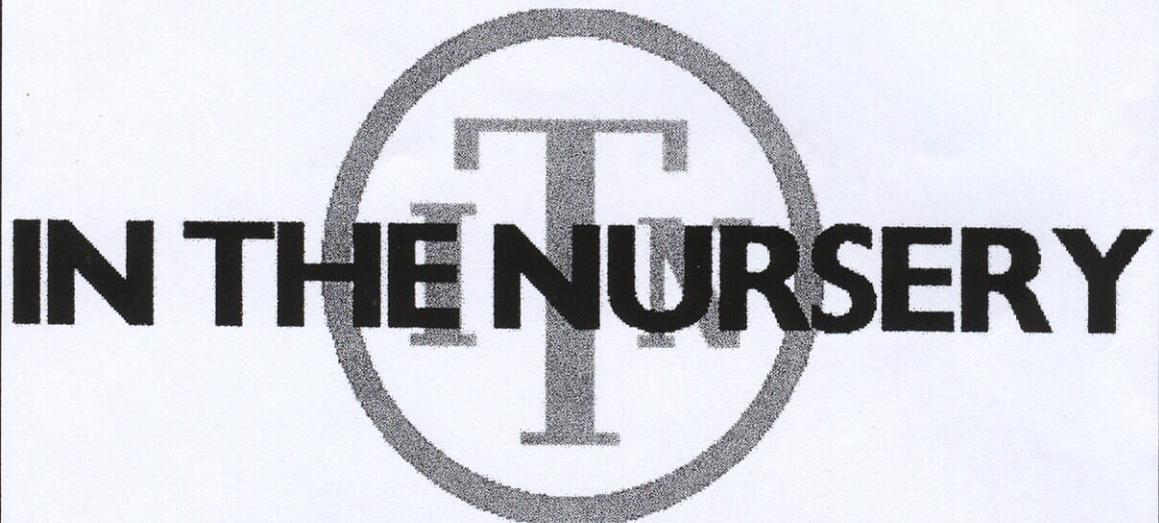
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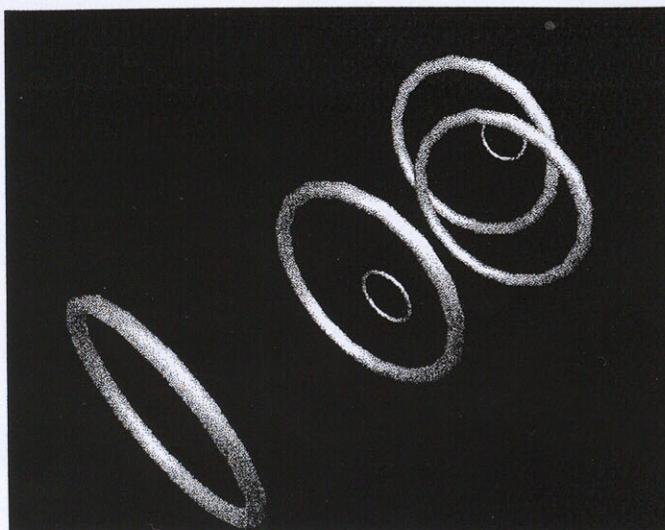
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Another year, another Mécano... The length of the magazine has been sacrificed for a more regular and frequent publication mode. Therefore, Mécano will now be available approximately every 8-10 weeks.

In this issue, we have an introductory piece on Richard Johnson's Aphasia project and Atmoject label, plus a short interview with Kapotte Muziek's Frans de Waard, co-founder of the legendary Staalplaat label and a prolific musician. We also have some exclusive photos from the London-based Gavin Brick.

We hope that you will enjoy this issue of Mécano.

All the best for 1997,

AK

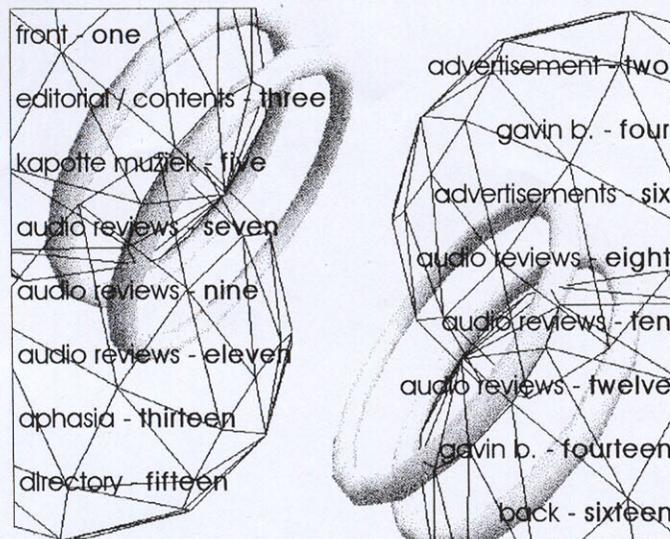
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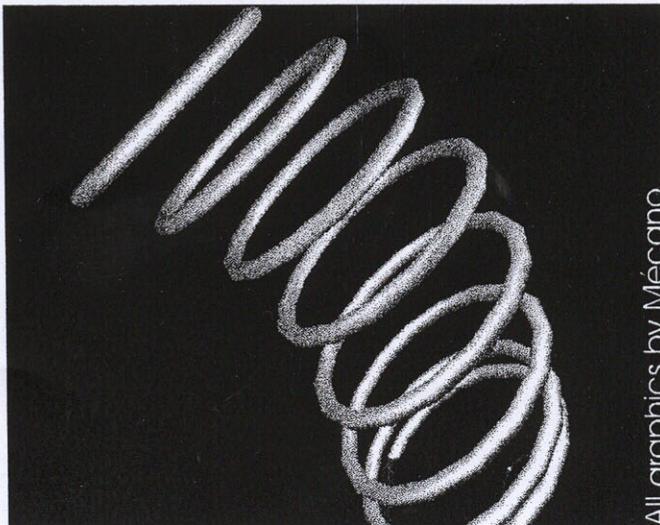
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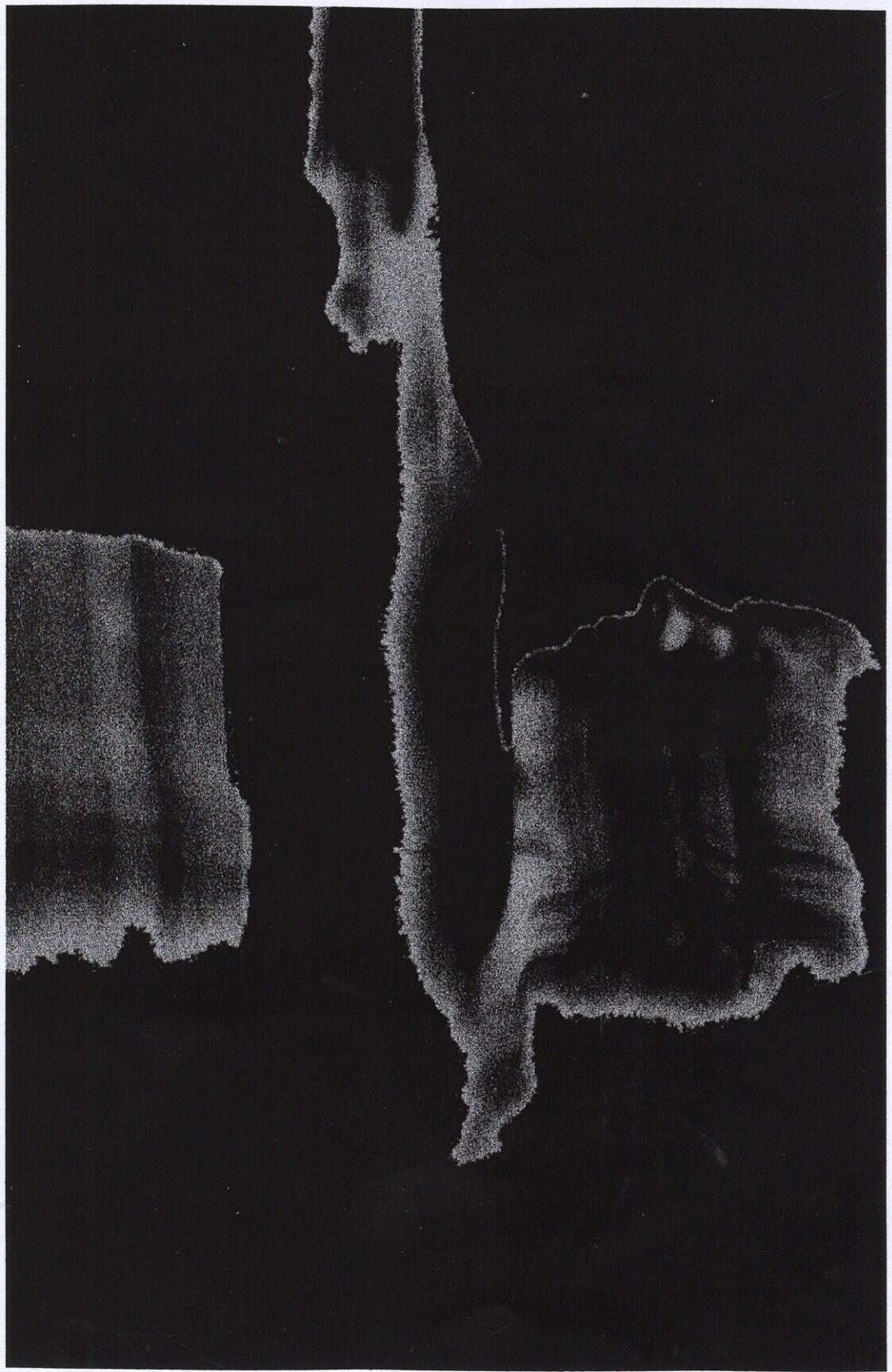
Thank you:

Richard Johnson
Frans de Waard / Staalplaat
Gavin Brick
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Kev / MuzaMuza
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Massimiliano Gatti
Steve Fricker / Cheeses International
Nigel + Klive / I.T.N. Corporation
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All graphics by Mécano

gavin brick · untitled · october 1996



Tell me about the formation of Kapotte Muziek. Was it an extension of a previous project / existing 'idea' or framework?

"Kapotte Muziek started out in 1984 as I was compiling a cassette compilation of Dutch industrial music. I felt I had to add something myself, as I was very much interested in doing that kind of music myself. Before that I had been doing very minimal recordings, very lo-fi (as they would say now). A very small portion was ever released on cassette under a different name. I used lots of names, but nothing is really worth mentioning. After that cassette was released one of the guys from class I was in bought a copy from me and was also into the idea of doing this kind of music. He had various kinds of instruments or knew places were to borrow them. Here the idea of sound recycling was born: he recorded tapes with those instruments (guitars, synths) and hand me over the tapes. I would manipulate these (slowing down, speeding up, looping, backward play etc.) and then I would release them."

What distinguishes Kapotte Muziek from Beequeen, or your collaborative recordings?

"I would say that Kapotte Muziek focuses more on ideas and concepts as I hope that each specific work is a concept of its own. Beequeen is more about doing 'nice' music as it were. Beequeen doesn't start with a concept, but it starts by seeking nice sounds (or what we think is nice sounds) and constructing a track from there. Also I use various other names, such as Quest (which is more synthetic ambient), Shifts (the guitar as the source of ambient music) and Captain Black (doing only remixes from other people's stuff - without them asking for it)."

Is Kapotte Muziek a solo project?

"When I do recording at home, I am on my own. But Kapotte Muziek also plays live, doing something that I would describe as something different, and we concentrate very much on small sounds from small objects. In a live situation, Kapotte Muziek is besides myself, Peter Duimelinks and Roel Meekop. With Peter I did a whole US Tour in 1993 and Roel joined us last year. This year we have been quite active with lots of live shows. Both Peter and Roel were former members of THU20 - a five piece electro-acoustic band from The Netherlands and they still do solo stuff as well as duo stuff."

Bearing in mind Kapotte Muziek's work mode (recycling sounds), do you prefer to work with material submitted to you by other artists, or would you rather seek out original sound sources?

"This depends very much on the idea I have in mind. I like to work with other people's stuff, sometimes it's quite easy, and other projects can last for ages. It's interesting to see what other people offer as sound material, to seek the sonic content and get inspiration from that. Nevertheless sometimes it is necessary to record sounds myself, and basically I can / will use whatever I can get."

Is there an ultimate goal you would like to achieve with Kapotte Muziek?

"Well, no real goals. I believe that music can't hold a 'message', artwork, words can hold a message but sound itself is free and open for interpretation. Sometimes I am asked what my music means, but the answer is always: 'whatever you want it to mean'. Music for me functions on 2 levels: one is to please people and one is to try and do something new. Kapotte Muziek acts on both levels. I like doing sheer noise things for the fun of it and to please people, but I also like doing something new and conceptual which is not easy to approach for others."

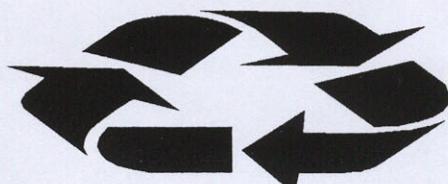
Have you explored any other mediums (such as video, 'art') as Kapotte Muziek?

"I have done so, but I don't anymore. I made a short video for a video compilation, 18mm. film with Isoundtrack and screen to project on, and I did a couple of installations with xerox art. At the moment I am not really doing any visual stuff, mainly because I feel I have not much to say and that I couldn't realise what I would like to do. Also I think other people can do much more interesting stuff than I could do."

Who's work would you most like to 're-structure'?

"There is no real want list in that respect. There are a lot of interesting people around doing interesting music which I would like to work with. I have a lot of commitments already and my time is limited to evenings and weekends. But I still get material from people and I hope I have the time to work with them all." ■

For further information on Kapotte Muziek (including a complete discography) and related projects check out Frans's home-page : <http://www.spg.wau.nl/bosb/stud/pp/vdheijden>. You can also subscribe to Vital Weekly, a free on-line round-up of the latest electronic/experimental/noise... releases compiled by Frans and his Staalplaat chums. To receive Vital Weekly, e-mail staal@euronet.nl



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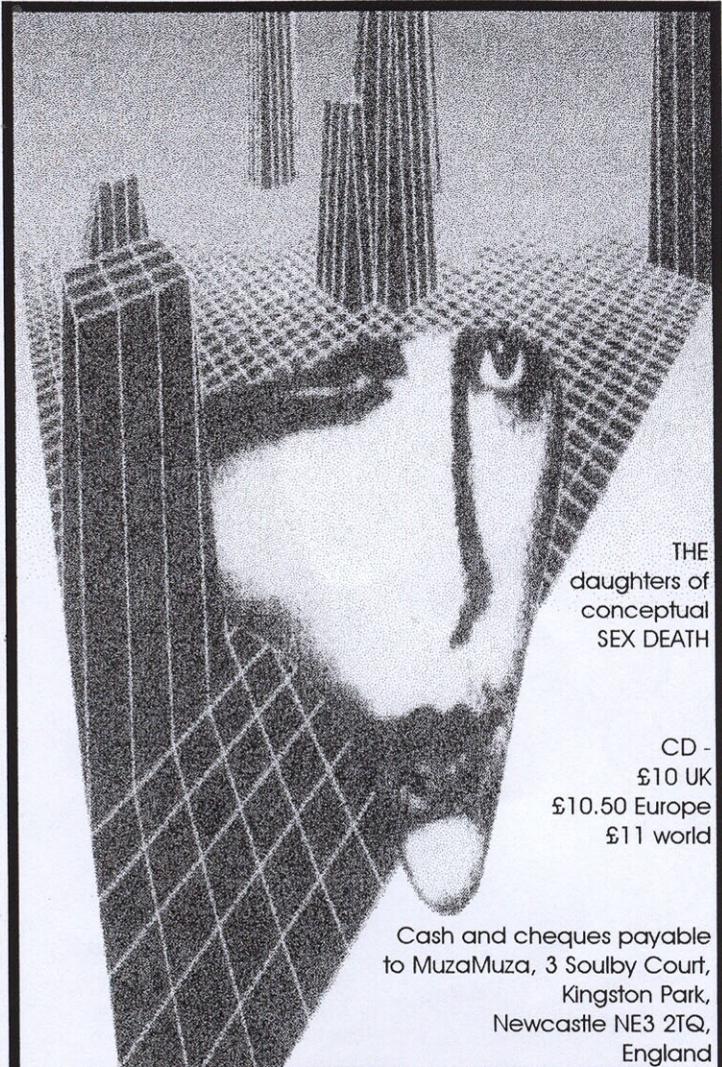
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audio review

APHASIA / DACHISE
SPLIT DISC
REALIZATION CD (RZD-021), 67 MINUTES

This much-delayed release showcases two of the U.K.'s most prominent new talents. The transition from the cassette medium to the digital domain has positively enhanced Aphasia and Dachise's work. Richard Johnson's highly intricate enviro-concrète compositions display a profound understanding of effective sound (and silence) manipulation, as brought to the fore on 'False Orientation'. Dachise present four tracks - the first two have painfully-high frequencies which occasionally give way to a variety of equally harsh sounds. The CD's closing track, 'Desleper', is an enveloping mass of echoing sounds; it is Dachise's finest contribution to this collection of high quality new material. [AK] [*Aphasia's split CD with Brume will be reviewed in Mécano 1.3; we are also planning a feature on Dachise in the same issue*]

ARTIFICIAL MEMORY TRACE VOL. 5
TH ALITY ABSFRACT
AUDIOVIEW CD (AUDIO 001), 77 MINUTES

Th Ality Abstract is the first CD on Belgium's Lowlands Distribution new sub-label, Audioview, an outlet dedicated to 'dislocated electronic turbulence'. According to the press release, "Artificial Memory Trace is the project from Czech composer, performance artist and painter Slavek Kwi. His musical influences range from dark ambient (*Nurse with Wound* ['dark ambient'?!], Zoviet France, *Illusion of Safety*) to the Canadian electro-acoustic school." This ten-part composition, perhaps inevitably, is often reminiscent of the work of those listed above, but is nonetheless an expertly produced and highly stylish recording in its own right. [AK]

AUBE
AUTODECISION
BETLEY WELCOMES CAREFUL DRIVERS 7"

"Using only the sounds of the executive decision-maker as source material" [??], Autodecision, in two virtually identical parts, is a fine slice of rhythmic feedback and noise. [AK]

BELT
THE KILLING VERDICT
FREEDOM IN A VACUUM CD (VACCD.04),
41 MINUTES

Six gloomy tracks utilising whispered / distorted vocals over a backdrop of feedback or mono-tone acoustic guitar / bass strumming. Every now and then, the gothic atmosphere erupts into a Swans-like crescendo of power chords and looped voices. Decidedly dark and quite unsettling. [AK]

BIG ROAD BREAKER
DON'T FUCK WITH THE ANGELS
MUZAMUZA CD (MUZA 05CD), 63 MINUTES

A sonically and visually engaging package, *Don't Fuck with the Angels* veers from electro-

acoustic collage work to crunchy noise, via passages of murky post-industrial soundscapes. 'Drone Nose', a mammoth, 17-minute onslaught of percussion and electronics seals off this dynamic release in fitting fashion. [AK]

BLOWHOLE
REASSEMBLED
B/B CASSETTE (B/B 9505)

Varied tracks covering different 'noise' styles from organic sounds, found instruments and a whole bunch of people on a stage blaring away on conventional instruments. The strongest point of this release is, in fact, this variation which prevents everything from mushing together into one long screech or drone as some noise does. [Z]

BRUME
ANASTOMOSE
ANT-ZEN 10" (ACT 47)

Anastomose, in two parts, combines a myriad of electro-acoustic sound sources (voices, rhythm, strings, silence...), presented on a Françoise Duvivier-adorned picture disc. These compositions have a definite soundtrack feel, and are somewhat easier on the ear than Brume's contributions to the recent split CD with Aphasia. Overall, this is an excellent release and a personal favourite. [AK]

DANIEL BRUSASCHETTO
PATURNIE
HAX 7" (HAX 09)

A four-track E.P. from a member of Mudcake & Whip [*Who they?*] It is a fairly non-descript affair, bar 'Schiavo' and 'Movements', which come across as a Bauhaus / Virgin Prunes amalgamation. [AK]

CERAMIC HOBS / TO LIVE AND SHAVE IN L.A.
SPLIT 7"
BETLEY WELCOMES CAREFUL DRIVERS 7"

Ceramic Hobs' contribution is a dismal mish-mash of lame guitar 'noise', three-chord basslines and the odd barely discernible sample. Back to the bedroom, boys. To Live and Shave in L.A. thankfully posses some imagination - their two tracks sound like a less 'song'-led Costes, featuring ranting vocals over shifting, noisy collages of effects and samples. [AK]

CONTAGIOUS ORGASM
THE EXAMINATION OF AUDITORY SENSE
ANT-ZEN CD (ACT 41), 63 MINUTES

An impressive second release from Japan's Contagious Orgasm, superbly encased in hard, fold-out textured card with six loose photographs (each representing one of the album's tracks). *The Examination of Auditory Sense* is a collection of tightly-controlled dark sound collages, each one as stark as the accompanying images. Ant-Zen aptly describe this CD as an "ambient noise hymn". I would describe it as essential listening. [AK]

audio review

CONTROL PANEL 02 INSIGNIFICANT RECORDS 12" (INS. 15)

Apparently, this oddity is the work of Warren De fever, guitarist with His Name is Alive. Control Panel's two tracks are both wholly electronic, without a hint of a six-string throughout their lengthy duration. The first side is a digital quasi-'dance' track - quite hard in places, but far too experimental for your local disco (unless they are on Mille Plateaux's mailing-list...) The reverse side is just that, a stripped-down, semi-classical version of the first track. A totally unique release. Wonderful. [AK]

THE DAUGHTERS OF CONCEPTUAL SEX- DEATH MUZAMUZA CD (MUZA 06CD), 54 MINUTES

Muzamuzza's line of enigmatic releases continues with this striking artefact. The Daughters' music is incredibly versatile - there is no apparent common thread linking the tracks together. Moments of beauty ('Apropos Severity') and coarseness ('Essential Listening Pt. 1') entwine with ease. The album's sheer diversity is its stronghold - this is one CD you will not tire of quickly. [AK]

DELPHIUM/SHEEPHEAD SPLIT E.P. AQUESE RECORDINGS 7" (AQR707)

Delphium's three tracks are moody electronic soundscapes, evoking the superb De Fabriek circa *Labish Intermedialies*. Sheephead contribute just one track, *Instinct*, a percussive mantra awash with subtle noise and chanting. Look out for a split Delphium/Sheephead album. [AK]

DISSECTING TABLE DEAD BODY AND ME DAFT CD (D1018CD), 42 MINUTES

Another great release from Dirk Ivens' label. *Dead Body and Me* was apparently recorded for a performance, the nature of which will remain shrouded in mystery as the disc comes sans sleeve notes. Contrary to previous Dissecting Table albums, this one is low on brutal metal rhythms; its four components are each a mini-soundtrack, high on atmosphere and shifting textures. This CD is probably the finest work to grace Daft's pristine roster. [AK]

DUE PROCESS COMBINE I-XVIII RRR CD (20), 55 MINUTES

Comprising RRRecords boss Ron Lessard and electronic musicians Thomas Dimuzio and John Wiggins, Due Process present 18 pieces of abstract electronic music. *Combine I-XVIII* elicits Keith Keeler's work - somewhat highbrow and 'difficult' in places, yet structural and fluid. You NEED this CD. [AK]

ALEC EMPIRE LE ÉTOILES DES FILLES MORTES MILLE PLATEAUX LP / CD (MP 30)

This is the latest release from the ever-prolific Empire (at least it was the week I picked up a copy). It is as far removed from any shape or form of 'dance' music as you could possibly imagine. *Le Étoiles...* contains 10 doom-laden, engulfing electronic soundscapes, comparable to the work of Lull or Conrad Schnitzler's more structured recordings. [AK]

ALEC EMPIRE THE DESTROYER GRAND ROYAL/DHR 7" (GR034)

This single features two tracks from *The Destroyer* album (also released on Empire's DHR imprint). '22:24' is an atmospheric piece of cascading rhythms and sequencing, whilst 'The Peak' is an ultra-brutal drum & bass assault. Great stuff. [AK]

FARMERS MANUAL DOES NOT COMPUTE ASH INTERNATIONAL 12" (TRAY 1)

Innovative drum & bass coupled with a track of electronic loops and other inhuman sound sources, all on top grinding, low bass frequencies. Farmers Manual also have a CD and LP out on Mego Records - all warmly recommended. [AK]

IDEA FIRE COMPANY THE FOURTH DIMENSION IS MONEY SWILL RADIO 2LP (SWILL RADIO 011)

I enjoyed Idea Fire Company's previous double-vinyl opus, *Explosion In A Shingle Factory*. I was glad to discover that album's wealth of eccentric music on *The Fourth Dimension Is Money* as well. Consisting of the core duo of Karla Gay-Borecky and Scott Foust, Idea Fire Company (with the assistance of several cohorts) utilise a vast array of electronic and acoustic instruments to create highly listenable soundscapes, varying from textural atmospherica to sound collages. Wonderfully bizarre and moody, *The Fourth Dimension...* is a heady experience indeed. [AK]

IN THE NURSERY THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI ITN CORP. CD (CORP 014), 60 MINUTES

This is a specially-commissioned score for the classic German silent film from 1919, and the first installment in ITN Corporation's 'occasional' soundtrack series, Optical Music. *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* has already received rave reviews in both the specialist and popular press. Its stark beauty and swift mood changes are the perfect accompaniment to the film's expressionistic imagery. This release is a mile-stone in ITN's flourishing career. [AK] [See this issue's back-page ad for details of a special Caligari screening in London, with live accompaniment by *In The Nursery*. ITN Corporation has also released Composite, a limited edition compilation (originally only available in Brazil) featuring two unreleased tracks. The band will embark on a series of European, American and South American tour dates commencing in mid-March. Check out ITN's web-site for all the details].

**INCAPACITANTS
AS LOUD AS POSSIBLE**
ZABRISKIE POINT (POINT 13), 72 MINUTES

Three tracks of supreme electronic noise. Those who have heard the Incapacitants' hypnotic multi-layered material before can expect more of the same; for the novice, consider the title a fitting motto... [AK]

**KAPOTTE MUZIEK
ADD**
STAALPLAAT CD (STMCD 007), 18 MINUTES

A curious item, if not quite a novelty one. Add contains no fewer than 99 tracks, which are meant to be played in the random order dictated by your CD player's 'shuffle' function. After repeated listenings, the resulting electro-acoustic collage began to sound all too familiar (silence followed by a few seconds of noisy scraping sounds, and vice versa). For effective results play Add on a very fast machine. [AK]

**KAPOTTE MUZIEK
ENHANCED ROOM ACOUSTICS**
B/B CASSETTE (B/B 9607)

The first side is very slow-moving and quite relaxing. The second side is similar but with slightly harsher tones and a higher noise level, although it never gets too extreme. [Z]

**KEELER
TRAPPED IN THE HI-FI ZONE**
MULTIMOOD CD (MRC 021), 63 MINUTES

Trapped In the Hi-Fi Zone is the second posthumous release of Keith Keeler Walsh's 'sonic constructions'. Composed of CD loops and alterations, voice effects and treatments, Keeler's music possesses quality and clarity of the highest order. The 16 compositions that make up this album are fully accomplished individual pieces of music, rather than a collection of obscure electronic sounds. *Trapped In the Hi-Fi Zone* is a contemporary and rewarding experience. [AK]

**MAEROR TRI
YEARNING FOR THE SECRET OF NATURE**
FOOL'S PARADISE CASSETTE (F.P. 35)

I wanted to slaughter this release mercilessly for a number of reasons: [1] I saw Maeror Tri live in September and thought they were a bunch of boring hippies; [2] this cassette is covered in stinky (and sticky) nail varnish in sickly blue and red swirls (a poor hippie's fractals?); [3] the titles of the two pieces on the tape; and [4] the dedication of this tape to 'nature'. Unfortunately, I found myself liking some bits, although I was reassuringly pissed off at other parts (like the strummy guitar bits). Hit and miss, mostly miss. Never trust a hippie. [Z]

**MASONNA
PSYCHETRONICS ERECTILE**
JAPAN OVERSEAS 10" (JO95-10)

Masonna's brand of hyper noise is given a wel-

come airing on this release. The two tracks on *Psychetronics...* contain all the Masonna trademarks: split-second tape splicing, incoherent screaming and layer-upon-layer of feedback. Never a dull moment - well worth seeking out. [AK]

**MERZBOW
SPIRAL HONEY**
WORK IN PROGRESS CD (WIP 004),
66 MINUTES

Spiral Honey sees the Metal Mad Man in superb form. The beautiful digipack contains seven prime Merzbow cuts, a couple of which even have beats! The rest of this disc is packed solid with thick, dynamic noise. Do NOT play this too loud!!! Fucking awesome. [AK]

MERZBOW/BASTARD NOISE
SPLIT LP
RELAPSE RECORDS

A rather mediocre release from Akita and the vaguely familiar (Man is the) Bastard Noise. Merzbow's four tracks are his standard electronic noise excursions, competent as ever but hardly noteworthy in light of his other, mostly excellent, recent recordings. Bastard Noise's approach is more considered - their six contributions successfully incorporate high frequencies, playful electronics, vocals, rhythm, effects and (obligatory) feedback. This album is also available on CD. [AK]

MERZBOW/XOME
SPLIT 7"
GENTLE GIANT RECORDS (GG 702)

Most of my favourite Merzbow pieces are tracks from Masami Akita's multitude of seven-inch releases. On this split single, 'Efface' is the usual barrage of manipulated noise - harsh and effective. Xome's tracks are both decent, if unremarkable processed-feedback-and-effects excursions. [AK] [Merzbow update: apart from Extreme's planned 50 CD boxset, look out for Blast First's Merzbow remix project CD, featuring reworked tracks by Panasonic, Jim O'Rourke, Bernhard Günter and others].

**MOTOR ANGEL
RE SANGUE MARCIO**
HAX CD (008), 58 MINUTES

Hax's recent predilection for Italian goth-tinged releases (re: the first half of DsorDne's last album, 24 o 25 / GRU/O/MO, and Daniel Brusaschetto's single [also reviewed in this issue]) continues with Motor Angel's 17-track hymn of despair. The most striking feature of this album is the similarity of many of its tracks to Nick Cave's 'The Carny' off *Your Funeral, My Trial*. The rest of this CD is taken up by rather bland soundscapes or spoken-word passages. Perhaps the fact that *Re Sangue Marcio* ('King Rotten Blood') is in Motor Angel's mother tongue prevents me from grasping the 'concept' behind it. Otherwise, I think that Hax's b/b or Lunhare associated labels is where I will focus my attention to in the future. [AK]

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AUDIO REVIEWS

ONOMATOPOEIA
INTERESTING TRAIN JOURNEYS OF THE WEST MID-LANDS & NON-PALINDROMIC PLACE NAMES
B/B CASSETTE (B/B 9006)

A to B - trains and noise. B to A - trains and noise backwards? hmmm... Some rhythmic pounding and some spacey bits. The package is nice but disappointing. Considering the size of the box, all that you get is a single cassette. [Z]

PANASONIC
KULMA
BLAST FIRST CD (BFFP 132), 61 MINUTES

Kulma (meaning 'angle'), Panasonic's second album, is their best recording to date. The divided opinions regarding the band's uneasily categorised style of 'techno-minimalism' are unlikely to be settled this time around. *Kulma* is characterised by Panasonic's use of repetition, a trait which has lent itself to the more experimental tracks as well. Although there are several highly rhythmic and dynamic moments amongst the album's 14 tracks (most notably the first and last pieces, 'Teurastamo' and 'Moottori', respectively) it is *Kulma*'s second, 'quieter' half that yields the most engaging results. [AK]

PINEAL GLAND ZILBERDRUSE
DAWN~RISE~DEATH
ANT-ZEN CD (ACT 69), 56 MINUTES

This CD is a retrospective summation of Pineal Gland Zilberdruse's career. *Dawn~Rise~Death* is firmly rooted in the rhythmic power-electronics field, a territory also occupied by the likes of Sonar and the :Wumpscut:-produced Noisex. This type of material is regularly played in industrial clubs on the continent, and even gets radio airplay. U.K. D.J.s take note... [AK]

PIUME E SANGUE
NEL VENTRE DELLA BALENA
LUNHARE CD (P.E.S.P. 2), 67 MINUTES

Piume e Sangue is back under the guise of Duo Portugal. *Nel Ventre Della Balena* ('Inside the Whale's Stomach') is possibly their strangest recording to date. It is similar to some of their earlier cassette releases, but has an added degree of charming eccentricity. The animated sleeve, incomprehensible interview booklet and fairground-esque music are a breath of fresh air and a welcome break from the many doom-laden releases I had to review in this issue. [AK]

POST PRANDIALS
HIGH WIRE MONET
ARTICHOKE / TRISTERO CD (3003), 66 MINUTES

Three seemingly endless improvised tracks, constructed from the traditional guitar/bass/sax/drums set-up, with the welcome addition of synthesizers. Despite an overall appreciation of *High Wire Monet*'s space-jazz sound, I find it severely over-long and difficult to concentrate on. I preferred the Post-Prandials' previous albums, *Flight* and *Switched-On Responsibility*, both of which are more varied and, thankfully, restrained. [AK]

PRK DCY
ROTTEN GROOVE
IGNIVOMOUS 7" (IG-02)

Rotten Groove's two tracks are very good examples of Nurse with Wound-inspired tape collages. Competent and entertaining - the essence of music... [AK]

MINURO SATO & TOSHIYA TSUNODA
FUL
SELEKTION CD (SHS 002), 59 MINUTES

Ful is constructed entirely from the amplified sounds of a room. Sato and Tsunoda's *modus operandi* involves attaching a contact microphone to the room's window, then playing back the recordings, "resulting in a more or less intensified presence of feedback." The CD's concise sleeve notes suggest that this recording's aim is to heighten our perception of decoding sound. This highly conceptual recording is based on some interesting theories; it is probably one of the most minimal 'non-music' pieces you are likely to encounter. *Ful* is the sound of silence. [AK]

SIX AND MORE
BLUE Q
ARCHEGON CD (GON 1003), 71 MINUTES

Six and More is a collective of musicians working in the electronic and electro-acoustic fields. *Blue Q* marks the fifth anniversary of this project (now in its 'third phase'). In groups of six or more, these musicians improvise with the aim of establishing a "medium of pure communication and interaction through sound". Utilising a large collection of conventional and more exotic instruments (e.g. egg-timer, electronic bread-cutter), the participating 34 musicians (including Négligé - Electronic Underwear, P.A.L. and :Wumpscut:) offer 16 tracks of quirky, yet atmospheric, electronics. Six and More is a fascinating and ambitious project - I look forward to hearing their forthcoming 'fourth phase' recordings. [AK]

SMELL&QUIM
JIM SEED COLLECTOR
PRAXIS DR. BEARMANN 7" (TH-14)

A disappointing release from those purveyors of perversity, messrs. Srdenovic and Foist. Noise, snatches of rhythm and porn film samples are duly present on both tracks (or rather constitute both tracks). You ought to know by now that despite the apparent vulgarity and unsuccessful shock tactics (although THAT Jesus Christ sleeve was quite graphic...) Smell & Quim are capable of producing some very fine music - their recent collaboration with Onomatopoeia, for example, [AK]

SMELL&QUIM
PISS WITH DRILLS OF BLOOD
SELF-ABUSE RECORDS 7" (SAR-09)

Smell & Quim are back in fine form with two tracks of tape-loop experiments, wisely abandoning the monotonous, raucous noise of the aforementioned single. [AK]

audio review

SONAR
ANT-ZEN LP (ACT 46)

Sonar is the side-project of Dive's Dirk Ivens and collaborator Patrick Stevens. This, their first release, can be best described as an instrumental Dive. The latter's feedback rhythms also dominate Sonar's output, and the track titles ('Mindradiation', 'Disconected', etc.) suggest a shared philosophy. This really should have been Dive's next album. [AK]

STIMBOX
S.F. 1995
B/B CASSETTE (B/B 9608)

Competent electronic noise, never too harsh or extreme. Nothing ground-breaking or too exciting; but then again... what is? [Z]

STIMBOX/A.U.M./DEATH SQUAD
ENJOY HAPPINESS
HEBI LIKE A SNAKE CD (H#22), 68 MINUTES

A collection of six relentless sheer white noise tracks. There is sparse use of sampling by Death Squad, but essentially this CD is an example of contemporary generic power electronics. For committed noise fans only. [AK]

TECHNOISE/HYWARE
SPLIT 12"
CHÉ RECORDS (IRE 1041)

Technoise's contribution to this 12" is a stuttering techno track overlaid with noise loops and other effects. It's not very dancefloor-friendly, but also too intense for casual home listening. Hyware's four tracks range from noisy feedback to Masonna-esque spliced tape madness. An interesting release, especially in this format. [AK]

VARIOUS
INSABILITY IS INHERENT - 60 MINUTES OF NOISE
[NO LABEL] CASSETTE

60 tracks on one compilation... and it's not Napalm Death wannabe bands! An entertaining cross-section of a lot of newer noise stuff in a good variety of styles. Would've been more interesting if the tracks flowed together more smoothly, creating more effectively the sonic collage this collection implies. [Z]

VARIOUS
A BLIND MAN'S GALLERY OF MIRRORS
FREEDOM IN A VACUUM CD (VACCD.05),
70 MINUTES

This is an anthology of live recordings (spanning four years) from the annual Freedom in a Vacuum experimental music festival in Toronto. Outstanding throughout, this compilation features a myriad of familiar names (Randy Grief, Edward Ka-Spel, Sigillum S, Dive, I.A.M. Umbrella, Illusion of Safety, Violence and the Sacred) and a host of more obscure, yet equally intriguing, artists. Look out for *A Wellspring of Perpetual Hope*, Freedom in a Vacuum's imminent second volume of live festival recordings. [AK]

VARIOUS
AMERICA SALUTES MERZBOW
VINYL COMMUNICATIONS CD (VC91), 64 MINUTES

Vinyl Communications' homage to Masami Akita's infamous project features 'cover versions' of 23 Merzbow tracks by the likes of John Hudak, Small Cruel Party, Chop Shop, AMK, Blackhumour, Allegory Chapel Ltd., Con-Dom, Big City Orchestra, The Haters and other lesser-known grateful students. There is a wide and varied cross-section of styles here, ranging from the obvious white noise excursions to tape cut-ups, Moog madness and even very CALM and QUIET soundscapes. Mécano salutes Vinyl Communications. [AK]

VARIOUS
ELECTRIC LADYLAND III
MILLE PLATEAUX 2LP / CD (MP 29)

Mille Plateaux's lengthy third installment of 'electric soul for rebels' features the high-caliber trio of Techno Animal, Alec Empire and D.J. Spooky amongst a total of ten contributors. Track styles range from trip-hop, aggressive funk and deep dub to revamped '70s disco, all with a decidedly warped edge. Of the lesser-known participants, Si Begg and 4E are particularly worthy of your attention. [AK]

VARIOUS
SEEDMOUTH
COLD SPRING CD (CSR12), 74 MINUTES

Compiled by Cold Spring's Justin Mitchell and Immerse editor Mathew F. Riley, Seedmouth is "a collection of international atmospherica". A fitting description, Seedmouth's 11 contributors all deliver serene, if overtly menacing, soundscapes. Best selections include Cranioclast's 'The Gestalt of the Doppelganger', John Watermann's 'A Bewildering Number of Brides' and Jawbone's 'Chemical Wedding'. There are several other well-known contributors here (Deutsche Nepal, Illusion of Safety, Lustmord) and some least familiar names (including the aforementioned Jawbone, plus Mikhail Atom and Inade) to check out. [AK]

VARIOUS
TOUCH.SAMPLER
TOUCH CD (T_ZERO_2), 75 MINUTES

This thoroughly excellent compilation contains 22 tracks, covering the bulk of styles associated with Touch and its Ash International subsidiary. Amongst the better known contributors (including the Hafler Trio, John Duncan, Chris Watson and New Order), the latter's 'Video 586³' is a fascinating early version of the classic 'Blue Monday'. Other highlights includes 'Channel of Light' by Locust's Mark Van Hohen (a fine example of minimal, yet powerful, dance music), Ryoji Ikeda's subliminal frequencies on 'Headphonics 0/0' and 'Air Traffic Control', 'Runaway Train' and Disinformation's 'Loran - C VLF', all selected from recent Ash International releases. This album is an essential collection of top-notch experimental music from this constantly evolving label. [AK]

audio reviews

RALF WEHOWSKY
NAMELESS VICTIMS
METAMKINE CD (MKCD020), 18 MINUTES

Nameless Victims is composed of split-second long metallic sounds (or 'clicks', rather), various resonant objects and the occasional plucking of contrabass strings. Despite the infrequent grating 'ambient' textures that these sound sources produce, far too long passages of complete or near silence abound. I enjoyed *Nameless Victims'* few audible parts, but find it too minimal and sparse to fully appreciate. [AK]

ACHIM WOLSCHEID
MOVES
SELEKTION CD (SCD 022), 38 MINUTES

Moves is a symphony for household utensiles. The 'instruments' utilised on its 12 tracks include amplified cups, a pot-top, flatware, a chair and a bucket. The resultant clamour is thoroughly unpleasant, and quite irritating. This CD reminded me of the sound of an over-worked computer hard-drive. I am very disappointed with this release; minimalism may be *de rigueur*, but I expected more than a vivid imagination from this esteemed musician. [AK]■

Reviewers: AK and Zamamiro
Please get in touch if you are interested in reviewing material for Mécano.

Aphasia / richard johnson

APHASIA / ATMJECT

INFLUENCES / INSPIRATION

Following a period of experimentation with sound composition, Richard Johnson began working as Aphasia in early 1994. Atmoject ('atmosphere project') is Johnson's own label, started in 1996 to accommodate a series of enviro-concrète CDs, of which *Brume Vs. Aphasia* was the first recording released. Enviro-concrète is similar to musique concrète, with its dependence on location recordings with concentration on structure, fluctuation and contrast.

Atmoject and Aphasia's first release was the *Body Exhaust System* cassette from 1994. This was followed by four other cassette releases, including a couple of tapes on the Bi-Polar and BHP labels. According to Johnson, "the early Aphasia cassette releases are not a particularly good representation of present-day Aphasia. However, they were essential to Aphasia's development and formed my foundation."

Last year, Realization Recordings released *Split Disc*, Aphasia's split album with Dachise, another UK-based project. Although this disc was originally planned as Aphasia's first CD, its release date was put back several times. Meanwhile, Atmoject's debut CD, *Brume Vs. Aphasia*, was released in mid-1996. Unlike Aphasia's previous recordings, Richard feels that these CDs represent his project well - "The first (CD) on Realization covers Aphasia's work during 1994/early 1995. The second CD on Atmoject covers Aphasia's work during 1995/early 1996 and is my most accomplished work to date."

"I have recently begun new work and hope to have around 70 minutes' worth for the beginning of 1997. This, I hope, will form my first full-length CD."

In addition to using his own sound sources, Richard would be interested in working with material from other artists. "Anybody reading, feel free to send me a tape along with a list of the sound sources utilised. The individual sources will be printed alongside mine on the CD's inlay. So far, I've received a tape from Onomatopoeia, but Steve Fricker is the only person I've asked to date."

- Body Exhaust System*
- Split cassette with Dachise
- Demos*
- A Short Collection of Long Extractions*
- Required*
- Split Disc* (with Dachise)
- Recycled Music Series*
- Brume Vs. Aphasia - Series One: Round One*
- Songs from the Best Intension* (v.a. compilation)
- Kino Eye* (v.a. compilation)
- Documents Obscura* (v.a. compilation)
- Bring on the Shits* (v.a. compilation)
- Impulse #8* (v.a. compilation)
- Track on MuzaMuza double-CD compilation
- Music for video soundtrack

"I do not see the point in releasing/recording material unless I feel it is 100% original, especially with respect to structure/construction. Ideas arouse me as much as sound."

"Looking for inspiration and influence from other artists would prevent Aphasia moving forward. I am my own and only influence. However, listening to the following has provided guidance in terms of compositional structure: early Hafler Trio, Illusion of Safety, Jim O'Rourke, Zoviet France, John Duncan and Brume, to name a well-known few."

"I do think that if you listen to an artist/s too often and for too long a duration, you will be influenced, whether you want to be or not. Thus I try not to do that."

"I often seek influence from landscapes (natural or man-made) with regards to structure. Many of my compositional structures reflect a landscape structure I have viewed. I also look for influences from films, again, with respect to structure. I particularly enjoy films that have sudden changes for no apparent reason. I try to create the feeling this gives within some compositions. Of course it is critical what the change is from and to. I've certainly been influenced by a couple of early Scorsese films."

"On the whole, I think I am probably being influenced constantly from surrounding sounds but just don't realise it most of the time."

VIDEO WORK

"I have not done any video work with respect to camera operation/production, but merely provided sounds for use in a couple of short films. The films appear in a collection of shorts, *Documents Obscura*, by Image 37 Productions. Their work should be known to readers of Headpress, Divinity, etc. The films range from the completely abstract to surreal horror, documentary, and sleazy bad taste. Recently, I have been asked to submit sounds for a full-length film by art company Wolf and Water, to which I have obliged." ■

- Atmoject cassette, February 1994
- Bi-Polar, August 1994
- Atmoject cassette, October 1994
- BHP cassette, March 1995
- Atmoject cassette, September 1995
- Realization CD, January 1996
- RRRecords cassette, March 1996
- Atmoject CD, June 1996
- IBA cassette, November 1994
- Crane-Up cassette, February 1995
- Image 37 video, May 1995
- BHP cassette, July 1995
- Cover-mounted cassette, March 1996
- Forthcoming
- Forthcoming



gavin brick · untitled · october 1996

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